

(12) UK Patent Application (19) GB (11) 2 314 290 (13) A

(43) Date of Printing by UK Office 24.12.1997

(21) Application No 9720393.9

(22) Date of Filing 02.04.1996

(30) Priority Data

(31) 08416033 (32) 03.04.1995 (33) US

(86) International Application Data
PCT/US96/04492 En 02.04.1996

(87) International Publication Data
WO96/31369 En 10.10.1996

(51) INT CL⁶

B60R 13/02, B29C 45/14 69/02, B29D 9/00

(52) UK CL (Edition O)

B5A AA2 AB19 A1R214D A1R314C1C A1R314C1D
A1R314C3 A1R314C5 A1R422 A1R445 A2E8 A20N1
A20N2 A20N3 A20T14 A20T16

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(58) Field of Search by ISA

U.S. : 296/146.7, 153; 49/502

(71) Applicant(s)

Automotive Industries Manufacturing Inc

(Incorporated in USA - Michigan)

2998 Waterview, Rochester Hills, Michigan 48309,
United States of America

(72) cont

William M Bolle

Theodore J Peterson

(74) Agent and/or Address for Service

Urquhart-Dykes & Lord
New Priestgate House, 57 Priestgate,
PETERBOROUGH, PE1 1JX, United Kingdom

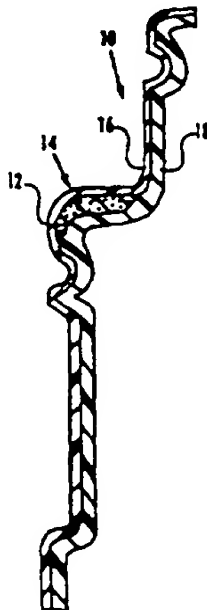
(72) Inventor(s)

Eric C Buckley

David H Johnson

(54) Molded plastic panel having integrated soft-touch armrest

(57) Plastic automotive interior trim moldings such as door panels, and other components surrounding occupants, are made by integrating a localized elastomeric plastic or flexible-foam plastic (12) between an aesthetic plastic sheet (16) such as vinyl and a structural substrate plastic (18). The method includes forming an integrated armrest in a door panel by first bonding a flexible-foam armrest pad (12) to a plastic cover sheet (16) simultaneous to the forming of the cover sheet (16). The formed cover sheet (16) with attached pad (12), treated as a unit, is subsequently attached to a structural substrate (18) by an in-situ molding which simultaneously forms the substrate (18) and bonds the cover-pad assembly (16, 12) to the substrate (18). The resultant molding possesses the feature of being a unitized door panel (10) that integrates an aesthetic cover (16), a localized soft armrest (14), and a structural substrate (18). The outline of the localized soft area (14) is not visually detectable.



GB 2 314 290